



U.S. Department
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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Study on Impacts of Sleep Disruption on Risk Factors for Suicide

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Researchers at Butler Hospital and the VA Office of Rehabilitation Research and Development's Center for Neurorestoration and Neurotechnology, or CfNN, and the Suicide Prevention and Innovation Group, or SPRING, at the Providence VA Medical Center received an award Nov. 24 for a nearly four-year study from the National Institutes of Health.

Principal investigators Dr. Michael Armeý, a research psychologist at Butler, health science specialist with SPRING, and Associate Professor of Research in the Psychiatry and Human Behavior Department at Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School, and Dr. Melanie Bozzay, a health science specialist with CfNN and SPRING, and postdoctoral clinical psychology fellow at Alpert Medical School, will study sleep disruption's effects on risk factors for suicide.

The nearly \$2.25 million study will follow 200 patients identified as high risk for suicide, after they have been discharged from a hospital. They will wear a sleep monitor watch and complete questionnaires on their phones to give researchers a clearer picture of each individual's risk profile. The project follows a paper Armeý published in 2018 showing this approach to be between two and three times better at linking emotional disturbance to elevations in suicidal ideation over a three-week, post hospital discharge period, versus more traditional approaches.

"This study is important because preventing Veteran suicide is a top priority for VA, and while we know who is at risk for suicide in general, we need to identify predictors that occur near-in-time to episodes of increased suicide risk or suicidal behavior, so we can better respond when we are most needed," said Bozzay.

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Sleep Disruption and Risk Factors for Suicide – 2 of 2

Funding for the VA portion of the study was delivered through the Ocean State Research Institute, a nonprofit corporation affiliated with the VA Providence Healthcare System.



Principal investigators Dr. Michael Armeý, a research psychologist at Butler, health science specialist with the Suicide Prevention and Innovation Group, known as SPRING, at the Providence VA Medical Center and Associate Professor of Research in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University (photo courtesy of Dr. Michael Armeý), and Dr. Melanie Bozzay, a health science specialist with SPRING and the VA Office of Rehabilitation Research and Development's Center for Neurorestoration and Neurotechnology, and postdoctoral fellow in clinical psychology at Alpert Medical School (VA Providence HCS photo), received an award Nov. 24 for a nearly four-year, \$2.25 million study from the National Institutes of Health to investigate the effects sleep disruption has on various risk factors for suicide.